

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

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AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 8496

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR XA OAU UN US

SUBJECT: NON-ALIGNED ACTIVITIES IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

REF: (A) STATE 99106; (B) ADDIS 7649; (C) ADDIS 7779

SUMMARY: THIS IS THIRD AND FINAL PART OF REPLY TO REFTEL A AND REFERS TO SPECIFIC QUESTIONS RAISED PARAS 7 AND 8. IT IS BASED PRIMARILY ON OBSERVATIONS MADE OVER PAST FEW YEARS, PARTICULARLY DURING THE RECENT OAU MEETINGS IN MOGADISCIO, RATHER THAN ON RECENT SPECIAL UNGA SESSION, WHICH AROUSED ALMOST NO DISCUSSION HERE. EMBASSY BELIEVES GREATER EFFORT IS NEEDED BY BOTH WASHINGTON AND AFRICAN POSTS, INCLUDING ADDIS, TO CONDUCT MORE SUBSTANTIVE DIALOGUE WITH OAU AS MOST EFFECTIVE AND REPRESENTATIVE SPOKESMAN FOR AFRICA. ADVANTAGES DERIVING THEREFROM WOULD, HOWEVER, BE LIMITED IN ABSENCE SOME ALTERATION IN US POLICY TOWARDS SOUTHERN AFRICA. EMBASSY CAUTIONS AGAINST EXAGGERATING STRAINS BETWEEN "ARABS" AND "AFRICANS," "HAVES" AND "HAVE-NOTS " -- AT LEAST AT PRESENT -- AND COMMENTS ON OTHER POINTS RAISED REFTEL A. END SUMMARY.

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1. WITH REGARD PARA 7E REFTEL A, THE OAU AS AFRICA'S PRIMARY REGIONAL GROUPING SEEMS FROM ADDIS PERSPECTIVE MORE SOLIDLY BASED ON GEO-POLITICAL REALITIES AND PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS THAN THE AFRICAN GROUP IN EITHER NACG OR G77 (SEE PARA 4 BELOW). TO A CONSIDERABLE EXTENT, AFRICANS HAVE SUPPORTED NACG OR G77 POSITIONS IN FRUSTRATION OVER UNRESPONSIVENESS OF DC'S TO THEIR NEEDS AND RELATED FAILURES OF OAU POLICIES, AS WELL AS IN SEARCH OF NEW ALLIES FOR THESE POLICIES. THUS, WHENEVER THERE IS CONFLICT BETWEEN CLEAR "OAU CONSENSUS" AND "NACG/G77 CONSENSUS," WE WOULD EXPECT AFRICANS AT LEAST INITIALLY TO SUPPORT FORMER. (TO SOME EXTENT, THIS HAS BEEN EVIDENT IN THE AFRICAN POSITION ON LOS ISSUES.) OVER TIME, THERE WILL PROBABLY BE MORE MEANINGFUL EXAMPLES OF OAU CONSENSUS THAN THIRD WORLD CONSENSUS.

2. WITH REGARD PARAS 7F, 7J, AND 8, THERE MAY BE DEFINITE ADVANTAGES TO USG, AT LEAST ON MAJOR POLITICAL ISSUES, IN APPROACHING AFRICANS THROUGH OAU, WHICH HAS PERMANENT STRUCTURE AND WHERE "MODERATES" HAVE SOME SAY, RATHER THAN THROUGH NACG, WHICH IS RELATIVELY EVANESCENT AND DOMINATED BY "RADICALS." OAU SECRETARIAT, WHICH PREPARES FIRST DRAFTS OF PAPERS AND OTHERWISE SETS STAGE FOR OAU MEETINGS, SEEMS INTERESTED IN MORE SUBSTANTIVE DIALOGUE WITH USG AND OTHER NON-AFRICAN POWERS. WE MIGHT WELL CONSIDER TAKING ADVANTAGE OF ELECTION NEW SECGEN MBOUMOUA TO TO RE-LAUNCH SUCH EFFORT. NEW OAU OFFICERS, PARTICULARLY SOMALI PRESIDENT SIAD AND FONMIN OMAR ARTEH, MAY BE MORE DIFFICULT TO REACH FOR BILATERAL REASONS, BUT THIS SHOULD NOT AFFECT OAU OFFICIALS IN ADDIS. POSSIBLE ADVANTAGES DERIVING FROM MORE VIGOROUS DIALOGUE WILL OF COURSE BE LIMITED IN ABSENCE OF SOME ALTERATION IN US POLICY TOWARDS SOUTHERN AFRICA. ANY SUCH DIALOGUE, FURTHERMORE, WOULD NEED TO BE TWO-WAY TO BE EFFECTIVE. WE SHOULD NOT ONLY SEEK PUT USG POSITIONS ACROSS BUT SHOULD ALSO SEEK GAIN NEW INSIGHTS INTO AFRICAN POSITIONS.

3. EMBASSY INTENDS TO TAKE MORE INITIATIVE WITH OAU SECRETARIAT ON SUBSTANTIVE MATTERS, ALTHOUGH WITH PRESENT COMPLEMENT THIS COULD MEAN SOME RE-ORDERING OF PRIORITIES FOR US AND SOME DOWNGRADING OF COVERAGE OF ETHIOPIAN EXTERNAL RELATIONS. SUCH EFFORTS WILL ALSO REQUIRE BETTER BACKSTOPPING FROM WASHINGTON. AT MINIMUM, WE SHOULD RESPOND TO OAU NOTES AND VERBAL INQUIRIES

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WITHIN REASONABLE PERIOD. FOR EXAMPLE, EMBASSY HAS YET TO RECEIVE INSTRUCTIONS ON RESPONSE TO OAU NOTE RE RHODESIAN SANCTIONS (ADDIS 5790). WE WOULD ALSO WELCOME MORE INITIATIVES FROM WASHINGTON FOR SUBSTANTIVE EXCHANGES WITH OAU OFFICIALS AND OFFICERS IN ADDIS, NEW YORK, GENEVA AND (CURRENTLY) MOGADISCIO.

4. (PARA 7A) REGARDING TIES BETWEEN "ARABS" AND "AFRICANS,"

FROM ADDIS PERSPECTIVE IT APPEARS THAT KEY FACTOR IS RELATIONSHIP WITH OAU (AND SECONDARILY BETWEEN OAU AND ARAB LEAGUE), RATHER THAN RELATIONS WITHIN NACG PER SE. IN OUR JUDGMENT, LATTER USUALLY TENDS REFLECT FORMER. KEY DYNAMICS TO KEEP UNDER REVIEW ARE RELATIONS BETWEEN EIGHT "ARAB" MEMBERS OF OAU (INCLUDING MAURITANIA AND SOMALIA) AND THIRTY-FOUR OTHER "AFRICAN" MEMBERS. IN THIS CONTEXT, IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT THE OAU ENCOMPASSES MORE THAN ELEVEN YEARS OF REGULAR CONTACT AT MINISTERIAL AND CHIEF-OF-STATE LEVEL BETWEEN THESE TWO OAU GROUPS, DURING WHICH CLOSE PERSONAL TIES AMONG LEADERS HAVE DEVELOPED AND IMPORTANT INTER-STATE AGREEMENTS HAVE BEEN REACHED. LATTER INCLUDES BASIC POLITICAL BARGAIN WHICH CURRENTLY CEMENTS OAU: ARAB SUPPORT FOR SOUTHERN AFRICAN LIBERATION IN EXCHANGE FOR AFRICAN SUPPORT OF ARAB CAUSE IN MIDDLE EAST. MOREOVER, EACH MEMBER-STATE IN OAU APPARENTLY DERIVES SOME SPECIFIC SIGNIFICANT BENEFIT FROM MEMBERSHIP (E.G., ETHIOPIA RECEIVES SUPPORT FOR "SANCTITY OF BOUNDARIES," NIGERIA AND OTHERS FOR "NON-INTERVENTION," ETC.), WHICH BENEFIT MIGHT BE JEOPARDIZED BY TOO WIDE A DEPARTURE FROM OAU "CONSENSUS." THUS, ALTHOUGH OAU FREQUENTLY SEEMS ON VERGE OF SERIOUS SPLIT BETWEEN "ARABS" AND "AFRICANS," THESE MUTUAL INTERESTS HAVE CONTINUED BIND MEMBERSHIP AT LEAST TO A DEGREE. GROWING NORTH AFRICAN MATERIAL AND POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR SOUTHERN AFRICAN LIBERATION EFFORTS AND OF LATE THE CONCOMITANT GROWING ASSISTANCE TO AFRICAN CAUSES AND STATES BY NON-OAU ARABS SEEM LIKELY TO STRENGTHEN THIS BASIC OAU RELATIONSHIP. IMPACT OF RECENT STRAINS ON THE "ARAB"-"AFRICAN" RELATIONSHIP, AS EVIDENCED AT THE MOGADISCIO SUMMIT, SHOULD NOT BE EXAGGERATED. THEY MAY PORTEND SOME RETREAT FROM THE HIGH-WATER MARK OF RHETORIC ABOUT ARAB-AFRICAN UNITY HEARD DURING THE OCTOBER WAR, BUT THEY DO NOT RPT NOT THREATEN SERIOUSLY THOSE KEY MUTUAL BENEFITS UNDERLYING OAU RELATIONSHIPS.

5. (PARA 7C) AS FOR STRAINS BETWEEN "HAVES" AND "HAVE-NOTS," WE CONFIDENTIAL

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HAVE REPORTED EVIDENCE OF SUCH CLEAVAGE WITHIN OAU. LIKE THE "ARAB"-"AFRICAN" CLEAVAGE, HOWEVER, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THESE STRAINS AS YET CRITICALLY ENDANGER OAU "UNITY." NOR DO WE BELIEVE THAT OAU "HAVE-NOTS" WOULD IN FORSEEABLE FUTURE ALIGN THEMSELVES WITH NON-OAU "HAVE-NOTS" IN SERIOUS CONFRONTATION WITH THIRD WORLD "HAVES" SUCH AS NIGERIA, SAUDI ARABIA, ETC.

6. (PARA 7G) WITHIN OAU, SOLIDARITY BEGAN WITH POLITICAL ISSUES AND SPREAD SUBSEQUENTLY TO CLOSELY RELATED ECONOMIC ONES. LATTER, IN TURN, STRENGTHENED FORMER. IT SEEMS PROBABLE THAT THERE MAY BE SIMILAR EFFECT AT THIRD WORLD LEVEL, BUT PROBABLY NOT TO EXTENT OF JEOPARDIZING OVERRIDING NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS.

7. (PARA 7I) THIS EMBASSY HAS REPORTED EXTENSIVELY ON ALGERIAN (AS WELL AS ZAIROIS AND NIGERIAN) ROLE WITHIN OAU AND WILL CON-

TINUE TO DO SO. WE WOULD WARN, HOWEVER, AGAINST USG APPEARING TO FAVOR OR DISFAVOR ANY INDIVIDUAL STATE FOR LEADERSHIP WITHIN OAU OR, FOR THAT MATTER, WITHIN NACG.

8. (PARA 7K) WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY COMMENTED (REFTEL B) THAT GREATER ATTENTION TO AFRICAN SENSITIVITIES WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY HELP US AT SMALL COST TO USG.

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